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HER BEAUTY GONE.

The marriage bond that had weighed so heavily upon her was broken now by death, and she was free. But as yet she scarcely realized her freedom. She moved still with the stiff slowness of one whose long shackled limbs have lost the secret of grace and fleetness.

This, at least, was peace. No longer she lived in dread of what the morrow might bring forth—what new shame or violence as the outcome of her husband's slavery to a degrading habit. It was good to be at peace. Long ago she had ceased to hope for happiness.

Once, since her unfortunate marriage, joy had approached her, but she had resolutely put it away, because it would have been a guilty joy had she embraced it, and to keep her conscience white was one of the instincts of her nature. Since then life had rolled on heavily, and at present she was sunk in an apathetic calm, with nothing more, apparently, to fear or hope or expect.

Then his letter came, and something that had seemed forever dead within her woke to life again at the touch of love. She marveled that he should have gone on loving her, unforgetting, during all these years. Not that she could ever have forgotten him. He had been remembered—oh, with what prayers and tears, and yet with a strange sweetness in the thought that she had been beloved by him!

Long ago she had resigned herself to the idea that her image must have grown faint and faded gradually from his mind. Yet now this happiness that she had dismissed with anguish returned to her, all the dearer since it had stood the tests of time and absence.

The year was in its fairest bloom. Deep upon deep of blue sky shone above the green masses of the tree tops so lightly stirred by the soft wind. The air was full of sunshine and bird twitterings and the smell of flowers. She had a fancy that her liberated heart would have more room for its happy throbbings out yonder in the green little park than pent up within four walls.

As she sat there on a bench in the shade of an oleander tree her vague feeling of wonderment at what had happened scarcely formed itself into thoughts. Her whole being was permeated by a sense of joy. The human procession which, only the other day, had seemed so dull and sad and squalid, was now transformed by the altered eyes that looked upon it. Two lovers that passed had the grace of youth and passion. The voices of the children, as they chased each other along the shady alleys, sounded as sweet to her as the cries of birds in springtime.

Idly she watched a woman coming toward her resting place, and a nearer approach showed the face to be a familiar one, though not seen for some years. In her new friendliness toward all mankind she nodded and smiled, and the other woman returned her salutation, at first doubtfully, with a puzzled look, and then with dawning recognition.

"Why, it is you, after all these years!" the newcomer exclaimed, holding out a cordial hand. "To think how well we once knew each other, and I was about to pass you by! But it's been so long, and then—" She stopped, stammering and confused over the last words.

"Yes, I suppose I have changed," replied the other in a low tone. Something dark had come across the brightness of the day.

When she was at home again, she interrogated her mirror. Yes, she had changed, but so gradually that she had not observed it.

Day after day she had seen that face in the looking glass growing old, but the serious trials of her tired, troublous life had pushed personal vanity into the background. She had been withered by that want of happiness which ages a woman more quickly than years or illness or hard work. There was no gray in her hair, but it had lost its silky brightness. The exquisite freshness of tint which means youth was gone, and here and there were faint lines that would deepen presently.

Tears rushed to her sad eyes, once of such a lustrous blue, and she hid the dimmed beauty of her face in her trembling hands.

"After all," she asked herself mournfully, "was it not perhaps my blue eyes, my bright hair, my pink and white skin, that he loved? Would he have cared for me if I had then been the faded, melancholy woman I am now?"

It was not as though they had grown old together, side by side. He remembered her as she had been in the flush of young beauty, and the alteration would come upon him with a sudden shock. It seemed to her that she could bear to give him up—keeping forever the dear memory of the days when he had loved her—but not to face the look of surprise and regret that would leap into his eyes when he saw her so changed.

So this was the message she sent him: "The years take away more than they give. I am no longer the woman that you knew. I cannot tell you how it has touched me to know that you have not forgotten me, yet perhaps it will be better for us to remember each other with love than to meet again."

But still she hoped he would come.—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

Keeping Him Down.

While stopping one night at a farm house in Missouri a traveler was astonished to see his hostess walk up to her husband about every 15 minutes and box his ears or give his hair a pull. In the morning the guest, seeing the woman alone, asked an explanation of her strange conduct, and her reply was, "You see, stranger, me and the old man has been fightin for ten years to see who shall boss this 'ere ranch, and I have got him cowed, but if I should let up on him for a day he would turn on me again, and my work would all go for nothin."—New York Tribune.

SHORT NEWS STORIES.

A Flask in His Wooden Leg—A Martyr to Melons—Never Touched Him.
Nansen on the Platform.

"Occasionally some funny things happen at the Soldiers' home in Augusta, Me., where I hail from, but the funniest of all is the one that I am going to tell you about. It happened just before I came on to the encampment," said William Harris, an inmate of the home, who is visiting in Buffalo.

"Whisky is on the black list at the home, and all sorts of schemes are resorted to to obtain it, but they are discovered sooner or later and can never be tried again. There is an old fellow with a wooden leg at the home, and his name is Wheeler. He had a scheme for getting whisky that baffled all the officers who were watching him, and it worked so well that, although Wheeler was drunk nearly all the time, his plan was not discovered until last week.

"The old fellow carved a hole in his wooden leg big enough to hold a flask of whisky, and whenever he wanted to get drunk he would get his flask filled somewhere and put it in his leg, go off somewhere by himself and get gloriously full right in the home. After the officers of the institution had uselessly accused every saloon keeper within a mile of the place of selling whisky to Wheeler they decided to keep a close watch on him. So the next time he disappeared they searched for him until they found him lying dead drunk in a graveyard, with his wooden leg unstrapped and the empty flask in the hole in the leg. That ended his game, and he will never get drunk that way again. If he does, his wooden leg will be taken from him and he'll have to stay at home."—Buffalo Express.

A Martyr to Melons.

The melon crop was short this year, and a southwest Georgia farmer who had practically "cornered" it in his neighborhood had suffered seriously from the depredations of some of the hungry colored brethren. So he gave it out that he had poisoned his melons, and after the news went forth he ceased to miss them.

Night after night an old negro who lived near the finest melon patch had gazed at their green sides with hungry eyes, but the thought of the poison kept him hungry still.

One moonlight night, however, his appetite got the best of him. He looked in the direction of the melons long and earnestly; then, shouldering a sack, he started off.

"In de name or goodness, Rufus, whar you gwine?" asked his wife.

The old man turned, pointed to the melon patch and said, slowly and solemnly: "I'm a gwine whar dem melons is!"

"But—dey is poisoned!"

"I know dey is! But I'm gwine ter take my death. Pray fer me!"—Atlanta Constitution.

Never Touched Him.

At the battle of Chickamauga a fellow named R— was seen shooting straight up in the air and praying as lustily as ever one of Cromwell's round-heads prayed. The Presbyterians of 1646 prayed loud and sang hymns in battle, but they shot straight at the cavaliers every time. This fellow was blazing away at the sky, and when Lieutenant Killingworth remonstrated with him about it he paid no attention to him whatever. Captain Joe Billingsley threatened to cut him down with his sword if he didn't shoot at the enemy, for the woods in front were full of them. He merely remarked to the captain, "You can kill me if you want to, but I am not going to appear before my God with the blood of my fellow man on my soul."

He never flinched, but stood squarely up, exposed to every volley of the enemy's fire. When the sun set on the evening of Sept. 18, 1863, Captain J. C. Billingsley and Lieutenant Allen Killingworth both lay dead on the battlefield of Chickamauga and R— went through without a scratch.—Galveston News.

"After Many Days."

Every now and then something turns up to shake the belief that the man who borrows spends the rest of his life in trying to avoid payment. One day recently the widow of a gentleman who was one of the best known and most highly regarded citizens of Washington was informed that a visitor wished to see her. Being ill, she sent her granddaughter to see the caller.

"Your grandfather," said the caller to the young lady, "loaned me \$18 a long time ago, when I used to work up at the capital, and I want to pay it to his widow. My name? Oh, never mind about that; you wouldn't know it if you heard it. Here's the \$18. I don't want any receipt; he never asked me for a receipt. Here's the money. Goodby."

And away went the honest unknown.—Washington Post.

Nansen on the Platform.

"When in London, some months ago, I had the pleasure of hearing Nansen, the great arctic explorer, lecture," said a returned traveler the other day. "The cost of admission was rather high, \$5, but it was well worth the price to hear his vivid descriptions. He speaks with an English accent, but very clearly and correctly. One of the most pathetic things he told about was the killing of his pet dogs for food. He hadn't the heart to commit the deed and delegated it to others. The clothing worn by Nansen and his party was on exhibition for some weeks in London. I imagine that the same sort of garments are in fashion in the Klondike for the larger part of the year. When once put on, they are not removed for months."—New York Tribune.

Steamship Firemen.

One hundred and twenty firemen are required to feed the furnaces of a first class Atlantic steamship.

HUMOR OF THE HOUR.

When I was born, something happened. It sounds frivolous, but it is not meant so to be in the least, because, while the thing could have happened without my having been born, still I never could have come into existence unless what took place at the identical moment of my birth did take place.

I am now no more. I have disappeared from being.

Sounds complicated, doesn't it? But it isn't.

As soon as I was born I came into possession of one man. I had no other parent, and the man was all the time fearful lest he should be obliged to share me with another. So he kept me religiously to himself.

In the course of time he died, and on his deathbed he bequeathed me to his most intimate friend, who was very much surprised to get me and not a little disturbed withal, but he had me, and the conveyance had been made, and that was all there was about it. So he in turn kept me many weary years, never letting me go, all for the sake of his old friend, my former owner, who had died. But the friend did not like me, it was clear.

One night, after an especially indigestible supper, he commenced talking in his sleep, and his wife listened.

At that identical moment I gave up the ghost.

For, while there are but few men who could have retained me, it is quite impossible for any woman whatsoever to have done so.

I was a secret.—New York Journal.

Reflections of a Bachelor.

A girl always looks so foolish when she lifts up her bicycle skirt on a muddy crossing.

It wouldn't be so bad to have the poor always with us if the poor didn't always have us with them.

Some day a girl that loves a lot of foolishness at her wedding will get killed by being hit on the head with an old shoe.

Times are getting better. For every woman in bloomers you see three advertisements offering to trade a ladies' bicycle for a secondhand baby carriage.

In a novel written by a married man no woman ever disobeyed her husband without getting into terrible trouble and then crying and asking him to forgive her.—New York Press.

One Follower Was Enough.

A little Atlanta girl had been told by her mother that God was always watching her—that he followed her wherever she went. This made a deep impression on her, and one day, when she was walking on the street, and a large dog had followed her some distance, she stopped, and, stamping her foot, said angrily:

"Go away, sir! It's enough to have God following me!"—Atlanta Constitution.

Fixing Up Terms.

Husband (at 11:35 p. m.)—What's all that racket at the back door, Maria?

Wife—My gracious, John, I forgot and locked the girl out! What shall we do?

Husband—Do? What can we do but offer her a raise of 50 cents a week and make it \$1 if she insists? Another break of this kind and we are lost.—Cleveland Leader.

A Lesson to Him.

First Old Woman—Isn't it a great peety about Mrs. Glen's wee laddie?

Second Old Woman—Whit is wrang wi' him?

First Old Woman—He fell over the pier and was drowned.

Second Old Woman—Aye, it is a great peety, but it will be a lesson tae him as lang as he lives.—Scottish Nights.

Her Choice.

"Slowboy he would rather run a lawn mower than lie in a hammock."

"How absurd!"

"No; he says his wife can't put the baby in his lap when he is running the lawn mower."—Detroit Free Press.

Dr. Pierce's

The raging lion that ravages the earth, seeking that which it may devour is a fearsome antagonist to fight. Ill-health is a stealthier but much more dangerous enemy. It is always easier and better to avoid it than to fight it. It comes in various guises. At first it is usually as a trifling indisposition or a slight attack of biliousness. Then follow loss of appetite, or headache, or nervousness and sleeplessness, or stupor. These are the advance heralds of consumption, malaria, nervous exhaustion and prostration, and a multitude of other ills.

There is an easy way to avoid, and a sure way to escape from, ill-health. Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery gives edge to the appetite, invigorates the liver, makes the digestion perfect and the blood pure. It is the great appetite-sharper, blood-maker, flesh-builder and nerve-tonic. It cures 98 per cent. of all cases of consumption. It does not make flesh flabby like cod-liver oil, but firm, healthy tissue, without corpulency. Honest dealers don't urge substitutes for a little extra profit.

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When any member of the family is sick or hurt, look in Dr. Pierce's Common Sense Medical Adviser, and there you will find the remedy. It used to cost \$1.50, now it's FREE, look pages. Over 200 illustrations. Send in one-cent stamps, to cover cost of mailing only, to World's Dispensary Medical Association, Buffalo, N. Y., for paper-covered copy. Cloth binding, 10 cents extra.

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